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ABSTRACT

This report describes the discussion and outcomes of a national summit on barriers to student learning that brought together leaders representing national, state, and local agencies and organizations. The report highlights specific gaps in policy and practice related to five fundamental areas: (1) measures to abate economic inequities/restricted opportunities; (2) primary prevention and early age interventions; (3) identification and amelioration of learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems as early as feasible; (4) ongoing amelioration of mild-moderate learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems; and (5) ongoing treatment of and support for chronic/severe/pervasive problems. The report then explores "big-picture" implications. Fundamental concerns are underscored regarding the absence of an integrated set of policies for addressing barriers to learning and the inadequate attention to closing critical gaps in each area. It is recommended that policy must ensure that resource mapping and analyses encompass all resources used to address barriers to learning, linking mechanisms for system change are established, inservice training is upgraded and provided to all involved parties, and more is done to promote parent involvement. Appendices include discussions on fundamental concerns about policy for addressing barriers to learning, and thoughts about improving policy. (CR)

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ED 461 212

A Center Policy Report . . .

Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice

September, 1997

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Preface

In 1996, our center held three regional meetings on the topic: *Policies and Practices for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Current Status and New Directions.** On July 28, 1997, we held a national summit on *Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice*. The various meetings brought together dedicated leaders representing an impressive mixture of national, state, and local agencies and organizations. In connection with this process, our staff is exploring the status of state and local efforts related to the topic of addressing barriers to learning.

As stressed in the report following our regional meetings in 1996, there is growing concern about serious flaws in current policies and practices aimed at preventing and correcting learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Existing policies and practices aim at stimulating increased *collaboration* within schools, among schools, between schools and community agencies, and among agencies at local, state, and federal levels. Such initiatives mean to enhance cooperation and eventually increase *integrated use of resources*. The hope is that cooperation and integration will lead to better use of limited resources; another implicit hope is that collaboration will lead to *comprehensive services*. There is, however, *no explicit policy framework* for a comprehensive, integrated approach to address barriers to learning and promote healthy development. To underscore this point, it was stressed that in policy and practice

- little attention is paid to restructuring the education support programs and services that schools own and operate
- little attention is paid to doing more than co-locating a few community health and human services at select school sites
- little attention is paid to weaving school owned resources and community owned resources together into a comprehensive, integrated approach to address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development.

Thus, *developing a comprehensive, integrated approach continues to be a low priority* in both policy and practice. Given this, the problem is how to elevate the level of priority policy makers and practitioners place on developing comprehensive approaches for addressing barriers to learning.

With these matters in mind, we organized a national summit for July 1997 as another step in moving efforts forward.

Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor
Co-Directors

*Our center, the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, is one of two national training and technical assistance centers focused on mental health in schools that were established in 1996 with partial support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Office of Adolescent Health. Our sister center is at the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

Executive Summary

Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing the Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice

On July 28, 1997, the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools held a national summit on *Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice*. The meeting brought together dedicated leaders representing an impressive mixture of national, state, and local agencies and organizations. This report distills and analyzes work done at the summit and integrates the consensus with other sources of data. The point is to clarify the status and implications of prevailing reform and restructuring initiatives with specific respect to addressing barriers to student learning and enhancing healthy development.

In discussing implications for addressing barriers to learning, major gaps in policy and practice are grouped into five fundamental areas: (1) measures to abate economic inequities/ restricted opportunities, (2) primary prevention and early age interventions, (3) identification and amelioration of learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems as early as feasible, (4) ongoing amelioration of mild-moderate learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems, and (5) ongoing treatment of and support for chronic/severe/pervasive problems. As a guide for ongoing analyses of policy and practice, these areas are presented in a framework organized as an intervention continuum ranging from broadly focused prevention to narrowly focused treatments for severe/chronic problems.

After highlighting specific gaps in policy and practice related to the five areas, the report explores "big-picture" implications. Fundamental concerns are underscored regarding the absence of an *integrated set of policies* for addressing barriers to learning and the inadequate attention to closing critical gaps in each area.

Given the widespread emphasis on enhancing collaborations and partnerships, the question arises: *Are initiatives to foster more collaboration on the right track?* The answer seems to be: *Not if by collaboration all we mean to do is integrate services*. If collaboration is to play a major role in improving how we address barriers to learning, such initiatives must keep focused on using resources in the most cost-effective ways to evolve the type of comprehensive, integrated approaches that are essential for meeting the complex needs of the society and its citizens. To these ends, policy must ensure that (a) resource mapping and analyses encompass all resources used to address barriers to learning, (b) linked mechanisms for system change are established, and (c) inservice training is upgraded and provided to all involved parties. And, initiatives must do more to involve homes, neighborhoods, and institutions of higher education. With respect to the home, policies and practices stressing parent involvement do not go far enough; true home involvement requires outreach and support designed to mobilize the many families who are not easily involved. Neighborhood resources include much more than health and social agencies; policy thinking must expand to encompass the full range of resources (including businesses, the faith community, recreation and enrichment organizations). Those involved in school and community reforms recognize that institutions of higher education currently are part of the problem (e.g., because of the inadequacy of professional preparation programs and professional continuing education programs, what they don't teach undergraduates, what they don't focus on in

pursuing research). Most colleges and universities have long histories of informal and formal relationships with public schools and community agencies. For the most part, the activity is ad hoc and fragmented rather than programmatic and integrated. To achieve more than a marginal involvement of these mega-resource institutions requires policy, models, and structural changes that ensure the type of truly reciprocal relationships necessary to produce progress in confronting the pressing educational, social, and health concerns confronting our society.

In addition to substantive gaps in policy and practice for addressing barriers to learning, the report underscores the failure of policy to deal with the problems of institutionalizing large-scale systemic changes. In particular, major policies for reform and restructuring seldom link vision for change with how to effect such changes and rarely provide adequate funds for capacity building to establish desired models *and* accomplish widespread scale-up.

Current failures of policy ensure that many more youngsters than should be the case continue to develop problems and are a needless drain on existing resources. By not moving aggressively to improve current policy we contribute to the growing numbers seeking assistance. In some communities, this translates into numbers so large that the resources available to deal with them are woefully inadequate, and the problems run rampant and seem intractable. And, of course, the negative impact is not just on those experiencing problems. *All* public school students are negatively affected as expanding proportions of school/community resources are diverted to cope with those who need more attention and special assistance.

One of the ironies when policymakers call for collaboration is that so little attention is given to forming collaborations to affect policy. Given the critical need to fill policy gaps and enhance policy cohesion related to addressing barriers to learning, the report proposes creation of a policy-oriented coalition consisting of key organizations. Such a coalition can generate mechanisms to prepare and implement a strategic plan to foster policy integration and close policy gaps.

To help establish the coalition, our Center offers to play a catalytic role and provide technical support (e.g., bringing leaders together, facilitating creation of a steering group, providing support for planning). We are currently identifying organizations interested in forming such a policy-oriented coalition. In early 1998, our Center will contact all interested organizations. Each will be asked to appoint a member to a steering committee. A meeting of the steering committee will be convened in early spring for purposes of strategic planning. At the committee's behest, our Center will create a dedicated "listserv" and website to facilitate networking and widespread visibility for the coalition. We also will provide relevant support including (a) technical assistance, (b) information about trends, new models, initiatives, and (c) product development (including preparing samples of possible federal, state, county, city, school board legislative changes, regulations, guidelines, executive orders.)

As soon as a functioning coalition is established, coalition members can set in motion processes that will produce a strategic plan for the coalition's efforts to affect policy. Building on previous recommendations, the plan might encompass (a) an initial *public relations campaign* to enhance support for policy changes that upgrade and unify efforts to address barriers to student learning, (b) ways to convene groups to formulate specific proposals for unifying and linking policy at federal, state, and local levels, and (c) a summit at which key organizations can discuss the proposals that are generated and their willingness to commit to a unified lobbying campaign for enactment of changes.

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Introduction

It is amazing what one day can produce when a top-notch group comes together prepared to focus on policy and practice related to a specific topic. One of the participants was Lisabeth Schorr, author of *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*. Her latest work is entitled *Common Purpose*. That term nicely captures the sense of energy that permeated this summit.

The morning was spent reviewing current trends toward developing and demonstrating model designs, decentralizing control, enhancing agency collaboration and service integration, consolidated planning, use of waivers to facilitate new strategies, linking services to schools, reforming instruction, restructuring how schools are managed, initiatives to enhance partnerships between families and all facets of the community (business, faith community, recreation, enrichment), and much more. A great deal of appreciation was expressed for the positive features of many reform models and for specific policy efforts designed to encourage reform and restructuring.

As the day progressed discussions heated up, and common concerns spilled forth.

Do current trends represent true reform or are they simply another set of fads?

What are the common principles and elements of current trends?

Are we really addressing structural problems? dealing with the core of systemic problems? or only tinkering and working on the margins?

We still aren't paying enough attention to prevention and early intervention.

We still aren't paying enough attention to economic inequities and racism.

Are we making progress? What outcomes do we want? What outcomes are we getting? Where are the data bases?

Legislators want evidence of cost-effectiveness -- both in formulating policy and for purposes of accountability. For education, test scores are all they care about. Different agencies are held accountable for different outcomes. Remember, politicians are thinking in terms of the next election.

Tax payers are reluctant to spend more.

Marketing is necessary to get support. We aren't reaching those from whom we need support. We aren't talking their language. We're either too general and vague about what needs to happen or we ask for too many specific things. We don't get the message out about what works.

Are we headed for reform wars?

We need a theory of resources to get out of the project trap.

We encourage fragmentation by rewarding schools for going after every grant.

We need policy coherence.

Can we all get behind a unifying concept? We need to speak with a single, unified voice.

Those responsible for system change are operating with a sound theory of change. Scale-up is a major problem -- good programs are not spreading.

We just get changes underway and the resources disappear.

Collaboration for what? Many different views of what needs to be done.

What is the right balance between local and centralized control?

University training programs are not preparing professionals for the populations they will serve, the jobs that must be done, and the contexts in which they will work. University research contributes too little to community and school reform.

Inservice training tends to be a sham.

Most schools are not a real part of the community; they are just places that sit in the middle of a community.

We need a bi-partisan five year plan that includes funding for evaluation.

This report reflects our efforts to distill, analyze, and extrapolate the summit's work and integrate the consensus of what was explored with the various other sources of data we have gathered. At the same time, we recognize that data are always filtered through a personal lens; we take full responsibility for any errors of omission or commission and for all interpretations.

Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy & Practice

Our Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter fragmentation and enhance collaboration between school and community resources.

Regional meetings and national summits focused on enhancing school and community reforms are a key facet of our work. They bring together dedicated leaders representing an impressive mixture of national, state, and local agencies and organizations to explore policies and practices and to do so using the lens of addressing barriers to student learning. The 1996 regional meetings highlighted the reality that *developing a comprehensive, integrated approach to addressing barriers to student learning continues to be a low priority* among policy makers. And participants underscored the need for analyses of gaps related to current policies and practices for preventing and correcting learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems.

Since the 1996 regional meetings, we have continued to explore the current status of policy and practice around the country. We have zeroed in on state and local agencies and specific reform initiatives using structured surveys, reviews of formal documents they distribute and material they post on their webpages, and insights gleaned in discussions with those who are knowledgeable about prevailing policies and practices. The more we looked, the more we were struck by how few initiatives specifically approach barriers to learning as a primary and essential concern. Thus, our July summit was designed to begin a process for enhancing realization that school reform and restructuring initiatives must be analyzed in terms of how comprehensively they address barriers to learning.

Participants at the Center's July 1997 national summit had the opportunity to review a representative set of major initiatives aimed at improving student learning and development. Featured as a leaping off point for discussion were (a) models designed with support from the New American Schools Development Corporation, (b) changes in thinking at the California Department of Education resulting from its adoption of the concept of *Learning Support,* (c) an update on the *Community Schools* movement, (d) the upcoming effort to realign Missouri's *Caring Communities* initiative with the state's education reforms, (e) the Kauffman Foundation's work related to the *Successful Schools* initiative, (f) the movement for *Comprehensive School Health Programs* as stressed in the Institute of Medicine's recent report and as supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and (g) the approach the Los Angeles Unified School District is taking to reform and restructure its student support programs and services.

> In addition, participants brought to the table an immense amount of experience with reforms around the country (see participant list attached at the end of the report).

The day's work yielded further appreciation of the potential contributions such initiatives can make and increasing awareness of how few models include a focus on addressing barriers to learning as a primary and essential component of reform and restructuring.

> Also evident was the likelihood of further confusion among policymakers and more fragmentation in practice at all levels as model advocates compete for adoption.

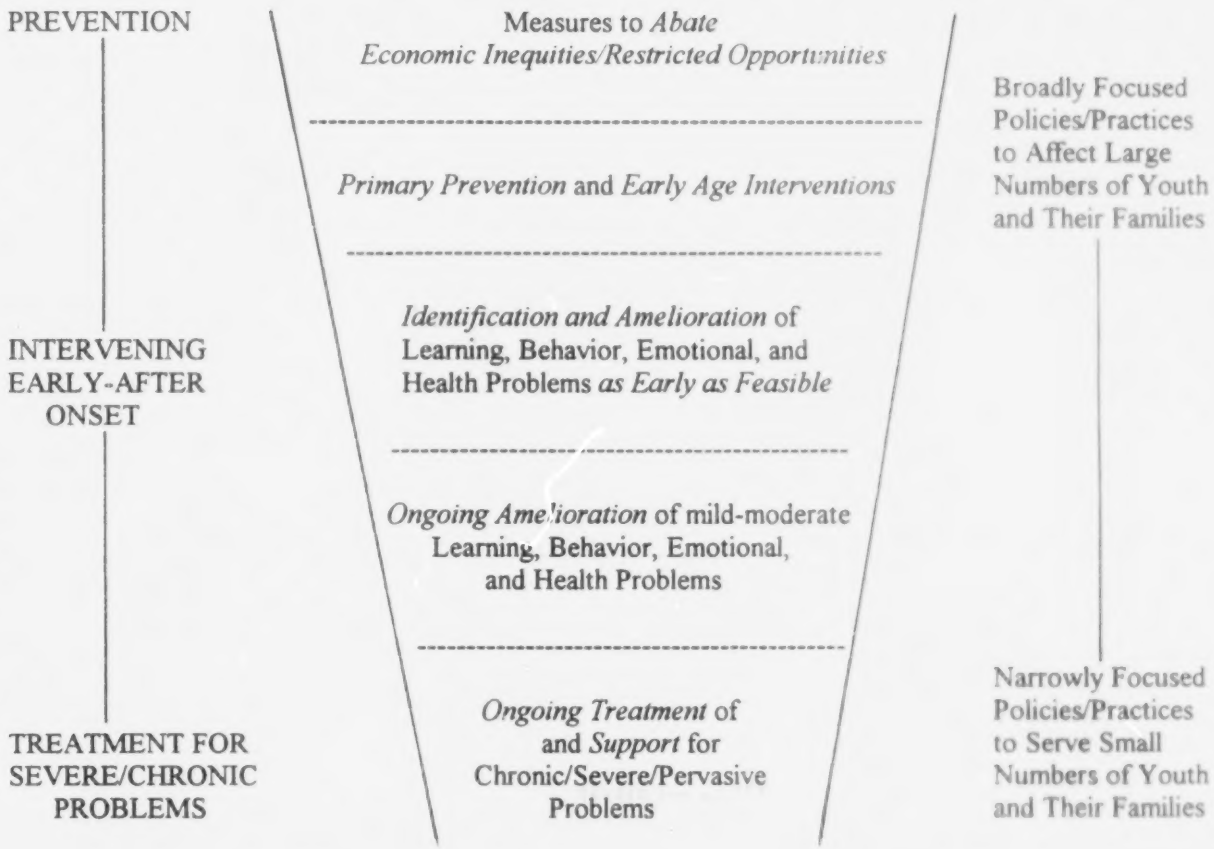
This report reflects our efforts to distill, analyze, and extrapolate the summit's work and integrate it with various other sources of data we have gathered.

Fundamental Gaps in Policy/Practice

When the lens of addressing barriers to student learning is applied to current reform and restructuring initiatives, the major gaps in policy and practice can be grouped into five fundamental areas (see the figure below). What follows is our effort to highlight the major gaps in each of these areas as our analyses have identified them.

Although the litany of gaps is all too familiar to anyone who works in the field, there are a number of implications that arise from viewing them within the framework provided by the figure below. These implications are explored after we comment on each area and highlight fundamental gaps in policy and practice.

Figure: Addressing barriers to student learning: A continuum of five fundamental areas for analyzing policy and practice.


PREVENTION
INTERVENING EARLY-AFTER ONSET
TREATMENT FOR SEVERE/CHRONIC PROBLEMS
Measures to *Abate* *Economic Inequities/Restricted Opportunities*
Primary Prevention and *Early Age Interventions*
Identification and Amelioration of Learning, Behavior, Emotional, and Health Problems *as Early as Feasible*
Ongoing Amelioration of mild-moderate Learning, Behavior, Emotional, and Health Problems
Ongoing Treatment of and *Support* for Chronic/Severe/Pervasive Problems
Broadly Focused Policies/Practices to Affect Large Numbers of Youth and Their Families
Narrowly Focused Policies/Practices to Serve Small Numbers of Youth and Their Families

(1) Measures to Abate Economic Inequities/Restrictive Opportunities

Everyone is aware that restricted opportunities affect learning and development. Restricted opportunities stem from a variety of documented factors and play a role in causing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. These circumstances are rampant in neighborhoods plagued by poverty. Thus, measures to abate poverty remain one of the most fundamental areas of concern in discussing major gaps in policy and practice.

It is essential to underscore that inadequate measures to abate poverty undermine efforts to improve educational outcomes for *all* youth. As long as so many young people live in poverty, many will confront an enormous range of factors that restrict opportunities, and significant numbers of these youngsters will have difficulty at school. With so many caught up in such circumstances, interveners trying to address the problems simply are overwhelmed. And, of course, the negative impact is not just on those experiencing problems. *All* public school students are negatively affected as expanding proportions of school/community resources are diverted to cope with those who need more attention and special assistance. There is a terrible irony and poignancy about the gaps in policy and practice in this area. Schooling is seen as a way out of poverty. Yet, economic and social inequities are exacerbated because of social class disparities related to who reaps the benefits of formal education and who suffers the consequences of schools where high rates of failure and disaffection are the norm.

Major Gaps in this Area

There is consensus that current reforms represent woefully inadequate measures to abate the scope of restrictive opportunities that exist in the country. Relevant analyses (reflecting fundamental differences in social and educational philosophy) are readily available and need not be repeated here.[1]

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[1]Below are a few references dealing with concerns about economic inequities/restricted opportunities.

For an intervention-oriented discussion of environment and reciprocal deterministic perspectives of learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems, see
H. Adelman & L. Taylor (1993). *Learning problems and learning disabilities*. Brooks/Cole;
and Adelman & Taylor (1994). *On understanding intervention in psychology and education*. Praeger.

For an urban schooling view of the problem, see
L.F. Miron (1996). *The social construction of urban schooling: Situating the crisis*. Hampton.

For an up-to-date social policy/practice perspective relevant to economic inequities, see the discussion and references cited in
"Children and Poverty" (Summer/Fall 1997) a series of articles in *The Futures of Children* -- published by the Center for the Future of Children. Contact: The David and Lucille Packard Foundation;
"Focus on Welfare Reform" in *The Community Agenda* (1997) -- published jointly by The Center for the Study of Public Policy and The *Together We Can* Initiative. Phone: 202/822-8405, ext. 45.

And for a sense of the possible, see
L.B. Schorr (1997), *Common purpose: Strengthening families and neighborhoods to rebuild America*. New York: Anchor Books.

(2) Primary Prevention and Early Age Interventions

The next line of defense in addressing barriers to learning involves primary prevention and early age interventions (e.g., fostering healthy development promoting public health and safety, developing programs for community recreation and enrichment in poverty impacted areas).

Major Gaps in this Area

Current policies and practices fail to ensure

- quality child care and pre-kindergarten education;
- home involvement in fostering healthy development and in solving youngster's problems;
- health care for young children;
- personalized instruction in the primary grades;
- recreation and enrichment programs for all youth;
- open enrollment options to provide a range of qualitatively good school program opportunities from which youngsters and their families can choose a good fit.

(3) Identification and Amelioration of Learning, Behavior, Emotional and Health Problems as Early as Feasible

Given that primary prevention and early age interventions are not yet a high priority in policy and practice, *early identification* and *amelioration* have gained some prominence as the next line of defense. The intent is to combine both facets.

With respect to health, the federal government's Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment initiative has demonstrated both the potential and the inadequacies of current policy and practice related to early identification and amelioration. In an era of reduced public expenditures, insufficient underwriting of this program has curtailed aggressive outreach and tailoring of strategies to reach various population groups. Even more basic is the lack of resources for ensuring that medical, dental, and mental health treatments are available and accessible. Consequently, in many cases, significant treatable problems are found, but families cannot be connected with appropriate treatment.

In schools, comparable gaps are seen in the dearth of programs that provide immediate support when a youngster begins to perform poorly academically. The situation is just as bad with respect to school programs that are supposed to anticipate and provide immediate support for youth before a problem affects academic performance (e.g., programs to help those who have difficulty adjusting to school, making other transitions, responding to crises).

Major Gaps in this Area

The need is to strengthen policy and practice to ensure

- aggressive outreach to find the problems ***and*** ameliorate them -- including home involvement in solving youngsters' problems and in fostering ongoing healthy development.

(4) Ongoing Amelioration of Mild-Moderate Problems

Prolonged curtailment of funding for education and public services has significantly reduced the availability of programs that help ameliorate mild to moderate problems. (Note: included here are recreational and enrichment opportunities that foster healthy development and resiliency.) Relatedly, the number of students with learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems is increasing. Thus, it is not surprising that referrals for special help are escalating. Less services, more referrals equals not enough special help to go around. What should be a relatively small pool of youth in need of support services has become an overwhelming onslaught that drains dwindling resources to the point where the majority cannot be served. And, for a large proportion of young people this guarantees below grade level performance at the end of middle school, non enrollment in college prep courses, and a high likelihood of dropping out. (Because so many of these students are seen as a product of failing social and educational systems, some analysts refer to them as *pushouts*.)

Major Gaps in this Area

Policy/practice is needed that goes beyond such current emphases as increasing standards and fostering collaboration; a primary focus also must be on ensuring

- high quality, integrated school-community programs designed to provide ongoing academic support and other related services needed to help those who are performing poorly at school; this includes assisting families so they can play a stronger role in helping their youngsters learn and perform more effectively;

  (As noted in our 1996 policy report, achieving high quality programs involves transforming the education support programs and services schools own and operate to ensure (a) integrated, programmatic functioning and (b) as much as feasible, a meshing of school and community owned resources. The idea is both to use combined resources more effectively in addressing barriers to learning and to evolve a comprehensive approach for doing so.)

- quality programs for youth not taking college preparation courses in high school -- either because they are uncertain about higher education or have decided not to go on.

  (Examples of options include courses in computers and information technology; programs related to graphic, performing, and culinary arts; high school academies focused on careers in business and the health fields.)

(5) Ongoing Treatment of and Support for Chronic/Severe/Pervasive Problems

The increasing volume of youngsters with mild-moderate problems is overwhelming the relatively few corrective strategies society has established. This means that a significant number of young people receive little or no special assistance, and their problems worsen. Because of this state of affairs, there is a tendency for teachers and parents to want more and more youth with mild-moderate problems referred for special education and related remedial and therapeutic services. Referrals have increased markedly for special education and other specialized treatments intended for those with the most chronic/severe/pervasive problems. Because of inadequate gatekeeping, this swells the ranks of diagnosed and misdiagnosed young people and misuses and overloads specialized systems of care. And, whether or not they end up in special education, students whose problems continue unabated over several years are prime candidates for dropping out of school.

Major Gaps in this Area

Policy/practice are needed to ensure

- more effective gatekeeping and detection of false positive diagnoses related to special education and other remedial and therapeutic services;

- enhancement of intervention effectiveness.

  (The focus on enhancing intervention effectiveness should include further clarification of the respective contributions of special instruction, psychotherapy/ counseling, dropout recovery, family respite/support/ preservation, juvenile justice transition programs, and truly comprehensive systems of care. A focus on effectiveness calls for policy that both ensures *appropriate implementation* of interventions, *under natural conditions,* and program *evaluation that measures their most direct results.*)

A Point About *Disconnected Accountability*

Everyone is aware that policymakers want accountability.

When it comes to any schooling expenditure, policymakers tend simply to call for achievement test scores as *the criteria* for effective practice. From the perspective of interventions to address barriers to student learning, this raises the problem of *disconnected* accountability.

Although achievement scores are the ultimate proof of effective schooling, these measures are too far removed from the immediate results of interventions designed to ameliorate learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Direct assessment of the impact of interventions to *enable* students to learn and teachers to teach requires measuring benchmarks that reflect direct, immediate objectives.

For example, because they are essential prerequisites to enhanced academic achievement, policymakers should look for indicators such as more home involvement, less absences/tardies, effective transitions, fewer dropouts, less violence, and less mobility. These are more reasonable results to expect and evaluate in efforts to hold nonacademic interventions accountable.

Some Implications

In addition to gaps in policy and practice that are evident when looked at from the perspective of addressing barriers to learning, other implications arise from analyses using a framework that recognizes the interrelationship of the continuum of fundamental school and community interventions that are needed.

No integrated set of policies for addressing barriers to learning

From a "Big Picture" perspective, probably the largest gap is the virtual absence of an *integrated set of policies* for addressing barriers to learning. The prevalence of piecemeal programs and fragmented practices is widely attributed to funding and guidelines tied to narrowly categorized problems (e.g., violence and substance abuse = safe and drug free school programs; teen pregnancy = pregnancy prevention programs; child abuse = protective services; juvenile delinquency = crime prevention programs). And, countering such fragmentation is especially difficult because some programs are separated from each other more for political than sound intervention reasons (e.g., compensatory and special education). The absence of an integrated "big picture" framework for policy to resolve major psychosocial, educational, and health concerns ensures that lobbyists advocating for narrow and often competing initiatives will push policymakers to enact fragmented programs with no plan for the pieces eventually to come together.

Deemphasis of the prevention end of the continuum causes problem-oriented interventions to be overwhelmed and problems become intractable

The sequence of interventions outlined as a continuum in the accompanying figure highlights how intertwined the areas are. Inadequate attention at the broadest level (prevention) leads to increasing numbers who need help at other points in the continuum. Thus, in the absence of an increased emphasis on measures to abate economic inequities/restricted opportunities, primary prevention, and early age interventions, excessive numbers of youth continue to overwhelm existing programs and services. As indicated in the figure, these fundamental areas require policies and practices that are broadly focused (designed to affect large numbers of youth and their families). Failure to close gaps in these areas ensures that many more youngsters than should be the case will continue to develop problems and be a needless drain on existing resources. By not pursuing prevention aggressively we contribute to the growing numbers seeking assistance for problems. In some communities, the numbers are so large that the resources available to deal with them are woefully inadequate, and the problems run rampant and seem intractable.

Collaboration for what?

The push for collaboration has stimulated discussions about potentially valuable system changes. One unfortunate side effect is that many groups are brought together to "collaborate" without taking time to build a sense of vision, commitment, and readiness for change. Thus, it is not surprising that the "not another meeting" phenomenon has surfaced.

Policy simply calling for interagency collaboration to reduce fragmentation and redundancy with a view to greater efficiency is insufficient. And in the long run, it well may be counterproductive to improving intervention effectiveness.

The example of school-linked services initiatives illustrates the point. Such initiatives tend simply to focus on co-locating a limited amount of community agency resources on a few school campuses. On the positive side, such cooperative ventures provide some clients easier access and attract some who otherwise would not have received services. It also allows some areas of intervention such as child welfare and juvenile justice programs to work more closely with other community and school resources. The work also demonstrates the feasibility of community agencies coming to school sites. On the negative side, such services are woefully inadequate to meet the needs of students and without fully integrating with school operated programs and services, school-linked services are producing a new form of fragmentation. Moreover, some policymakers are pointing to the demonstrations as evidence that community services can replace school-owned and operated support services (e.g., as reflected in increasing talk of contracting out work done by some pupil services personnel). Such a policy is likely to have a number of serious repercussions, including reducing the overall pool of resources for addressing barriers to learning and preventing efforts to reform and restructure existing resources to evolve a comprehensive approach.

. . . to evolve comprehensive, integrated approaches to address the full continuum of intervention needs

Collaboration is not about integrated services. Collaboration is about using resources in better ways to evolve the type of comprehensive, integrated approaches that are essential for addressing the complex needs of the society and its citizens in the most cost-effective manner.

Effective collaboration requires policy and practices that ensure:

"big picture" mapping, analysis, redeployment and blending of resources

Currently, there is no overall analysis of the amount of resources used to address barriers to learning or of how they are expended. Without such a "big picture" analysis, policymakers and practitioners are deprived of information that is essential to enhancing system effectiveness. Until there is comprehensive mapping and analysis of resources, major redeployment and blending of resources are unlikely to occur and the token efforts made will have little effect. At the same time, there should be no illusions about current allocations; even when public school and community agency resources are redeployed and blended, there is no reason to believe that existing resources are sufficient to evolve a comprehensive approach for addressing barriers to learning. This has obvious budgetary implications, but it also underscores the need to pay greater attention to integrating with all neighborhood resources (families, youth and faith organizations, local businesses).

creation of linked mechanisms for system change

Collaboration designed to produce the type of major changes implied above requires linked policy that

- delineates high level leadership assignments and underwrites essential leadership training related to *both* the vision for change *and* how to effect such changes
- provides adequate funds for capacity building to accomplish desired system changes
- creates change teams and change agents to do the day-by-day activities that build essential stakeholder support and redesign institutionalized structures and processes so system changes are established and maintained
- guarantees roles and training for the effective involvement of line staff, families, students, and other community members in shared decision making.

inservice training is upgraded and is provided to all involved parties

An essential element of successful capacity building is inservice training that significantly upgrades the competence of all who are involved in intervention efforts, including a focus on attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to system changes. Current policies and practices pay scant attention to inservice to improve approaches to addressing barriers to learning -- nevermind differentiating inservice to ensure different personnel are able to perform their functions effectively.

True home involvement requires outreach and support designed to mobilize families

Policies and practices stressing parent involvement do not go far enough and are widely ineffective in involving the majority of homes. They do not account for the fact that in many homes grandparents and other relatives have become the primary child caretakers. In addition, they completely ignore the influence of older siblings. And they overrely on parent education as the key intervention strategy. An integrated set of policies to address barriers to student learning in a comprehensive manner must broaden the focus from parent to *home* involvement and underwrite strategies for *outreach* and for providing a *range of supportive interventions* designed to mobilize families.

New thinking about higher education and school/community relationships

Those involved in school and community reforms recognize that institutions of higher education currently are part of the problem (e.g., because of the inadequacy of professional preparation programs and professional continuing education programs, what they don't teach undergraduates, what they don't focus on in pursuing research). Can such institutions become a greater part of the solution? Most colleges and universities have long histories of informal and formal relationships with public schools and community agencies. These include special projects designed to improve school and agency performance, placements for training, programs to encourage college students to volunteer as aides, tutors, and mentors, outreach to increase college enrollments, and much more. Some of the activity is designed to advance knowledge, some enriches college instruction, and some is done in the interest of service and public relations. For the most part, the activity is ad hoc and fragmented rather than programmatic and integrated. Clearly, the connections between higher education and public schools and agencies are not part of an overarching policy vision for the many ways the institutions should benefit from each other. Involvement of higher education in more substantive collaborations will not occur because of good intentions. To achieve more than a marginal involvement of these mega-resource institutions requires policy, models, and structural changes that ensure the type of truly reciprocal relationships necessary to produce progress in addressing the pressing educational, social, and health concerns confronting our society.

Participants at the summit recognized that the thinking of key policymakers is shifting.

Among the positive trends: the federal government wants more intra and interagency collaboration, the U.S. Department of Education is calling for school-wide planning to counter fragmentation, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is underwriting initiatives for comprehensive school health programs, and foundations are moving away from supporting initiatives that fold when project funding ends. And, as the presentations at the summit demonstrated, there is no lack of ideas for how to make things better.

At the same time, it is clear that policy continues to be developed in a piecemeal manner, with the focus often on marginal responses to complex problems. Policy makers can and must do better.

[Going a bit beyond the above analyses, we offer some additional thoughts about policy and addressing barriers to learning in *Appendices A and B.*]

What Next?

We find it easy to state the outcomes we want and then sit back as if we'd solved everything. We're great at stating outcomes, but we never really address the many problems that must be dealt with to get from here to there.

Like everything else related to the topic of addressing barriers to student learning, current policy is fragmented. So are the mechanisms designed to influence policy to better meet the needs of children and families.

Efforts to address fragmentation stress the importance of new mechanisms that support collaboration among agencies and programs. A comparable collaborative infrastructure is needed to work toward integrated policy and systematically filling gaps in policy and practice.

Our last policy report outlined some matters related to developing such an infrastructure. We build on those recommendations here.

As we understand the complex process of getting from here to there in improving policy for addressing barriers to learning, it requires

- setting a realistic timeline
- establishing a coalition that can generate mechanisms for advocacy, leadership, and ongoing support, guidance, and capacity building
- developing a realistic strategic plan for changes in policy and practice to better address barriers to student learning
- creating specific mechanisms and mobilizing resources to carry out the plan
- implementing the plan with a sense of relentless dedication.

Toward these ends, we see our Center playing a catalytic role and providing technical support (e.g., bringing leaders together, facilitating creation of a steering committee, providing support for planning).

Time line

A five year time frame seems optimistic. But realistically anything shorter is unlikely to succeed, and anything longer is unlikely to mobilize those who need to be involved.

One of the ironies when policymakers call for collaboration is that so little attention is given to forming collaborations to affect policy.

Working together to affect policy

Participants at the national summit in July represented a wide range of organized effort relevant to addressing barriers to student learning (e.g., some are involved in designing and demonstrating interventions; others provide support for practice or advocate for specific groups and approaches). In their work, almost all have shared the frustrations stemming from flaws in current policy and practice. And most organizations have experienced the fracturing of common purpose that results when they must compete with each other in pursuit of their specific agenda.

There is little reason to anticipate progress toward cohesive policy if concerned organizations (e.g., centers, guilds, agencies, institutions of higher education) do not work together with a laser-like dedication to improving policy.

Developing a broad-based coalition of organizations focused on policy integration

While every organization has self-interests, many share some facets of their agenda. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to suggest that the time is past due for developing a broad-based coalition dedicated to unifying and enhancing policy for addressing barriers to learning. A good step in this direction is for a group of key organizations to agree to become a policy-focused network -- linked by a common aim and with a commitment to devoting a meaningful but relatively small amount of resources to its pursuit.

A form accompanying this report asks about organizational interest in becoming part of such a network.

As a next step, our Center will help link those who indicate interest. This will be accomplished by organizing the coalition into an electronic network (i.e., creating a "listserv" and a website dedicated to the policy coalition). The internet provides a potentially potent tool for any effort to get from here to there.

Pursuing a campaign of education and advocacy

One agenda item for a coalition of organizations is to create a policy climate that recognizes the need for addressing barriers to learning as a primary (high-level) concern. As our 1996 report stresses, a central consideration in influencing policy priorities is to mount a *compelling campaign of education and advocacy* organized around a unifying vision of how to approach the problem. Here too, the internet is seen as a good place to start.

In addition to affecting policy, organizations that network can reap a variety of benefits, and many of these also should help advance policy and practice.

Achieving benefits and savings that outweigh the small investment of resources

By adopting a unifying vision and looking at their mutual activity through the lens of addressing barriers to learning, each organization can better clarify where it fits into the big picture. This will allow for analyses to identify complementary activity, common principles and practices, shared needs, inappropriate redundancy, and conflicting agendas that contribute to mutual problems. Based on such analyses, mechanisms can be created to foster mutual information sharing and specific collaborations for capacity building and problem solving. Ultimately, being part of such a coalition should result in benefits and savings that outweigh the small investment of resources.

As soon as a functioning coalition is established, coalition members can set in motion processes that will produce a strategic plan for the coalition's efforts to affect policy.

Create a coalition steering committee and develop a strategic plan

Building on previous recommendations, the process might begin with establishment of a *steering committee.* Such a committee provides an essential mechanism to plan

- an initial *public relations campaign* to enhance support for policy changes that upgrade and unify efforts to address barriers to learning
- ways to convene groups to formulate specific proposals for unifying and linking policy at federal, state, and local levels
- a summit at which key organizations can discuss the proposals that are generated and their willingness to commit to a unified lobbying campaign for enactment of changes.

Technical Assistance

In early 1998, our Center will contact all organizations that have indicated interest in forming a policy-oriented coalition to "Foster Integrated Policy and Close Policy Gaps related to Addressing Barriers to Learning." Each organization will be asked to appoint a member to a steering committee.

A meeting of the steering committee will be convened in early spring for purposes of strategic planning.

At the committee's behest, our Center will create a dedicated "listserv" and website to facilitate networking and widespread visibility for the policy coalition. We also are ready to provide (a) technical assistance, (b) information about trends, new models, initiatives, and (c) product development (including preparing samples of possible federal, state, county, city, school board legislative changes, regulations, guidelines, executive orders, etc.)

Appendix A

Fundamental Concerns About Policy for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning

Policy makers and school personnel have long understood that if schools are to function well and students are to learn effectively, factors that interfere with student learning and performance must be addressed. As the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) succinctly concluded: "School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students. But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge" (p. 7).

Funding for compensatory education, special education, safe and drug free schools, dropout prevention, and teen pregnancy prevention are prominent examples of policy efforts that involve schools in a variety of programs and services to address barriers to learning. Related efforts are seen in the emphasis on school-community partnerships to foster school-linked services that are part of various initiatives to increase health and human service agency collaboration and program integration.

Clearly policy makers have been active. Now it is time to review what has been created and make some improvements.

As a step in this direction, staff members at the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA continue to explore the current status of policy and practice around the country. We have zeroed in on state and local agencies and specific reform initiatives. We have sent out structured surveys, reviewed published and informally distributed documents and material posted on agency webpages, and sought out the insights of those knowledgeable about prevailing policies and practices. At this point, we can share a few conclusions based on our analyses.

On the Positive Side

There clearly are many initiatives at all levels designed to move things forward. Just reviewing the impressive array of documents colleagues have sent (before and since the UCLA summit in July) indicates the range of innovative work and the sense of accomplishment so many feel about the work in which they are involved.

The initiatives fall into three groups. One set (the majority) are designed to promote coordination and collaboration among governmental departments and service agencies to foster integrated services, with an emphasis on greater local control, increased involvement of parents and business, and linking services to schools as feasible. To encourage organizational changes, local, state, and federal intra and interagency committees have been established; legislative bodies are rethinking their committee structures; some states have gone so far as to create new executive branch structures (e.g., combining all agencies and services for children and families under one cabinet level department). In their most ambitious forms, these efforts are evolving into comprehensive community initiatives (CCI's) with an emphasis on community building.

The second group of initiatives basically are models for reforming and restructuring the instructional and management components of schools -- extending in some cases to entire school districts. Evident in most of these are the national push for higher standards and expectations, a results-focus, strategies to enhance direct academic support, movement away from a deficiency model to a strengths/resilience-oriented paradigm, and devolving control to school sites. In a few cases (e.g., Kentucky, California, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio), there are discussions of strengthening the linkage between school reforms and initiatives to integrate community services -- again reflecting recognition of the need for integration and comprehensiveness and the move toward community building.

The third group stresses specific approaches to dealing with problems. Many of these initiatives generate supplemental ("add-on") programs usually supported with "soft" money (e.g., programs for violence reduction, dropout prevention, substance abuse prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, school-based health centers, Family/ Youth Resource Centers).

All of the initiatives are relevant to addressing barriers to student learning. All are important pieces and need to be understood both in terms of what they accomplish and do not accomplish. And such an understanding is enhanced by viewing them through the lens of the likelihood that they can adequately address barriers to learning.

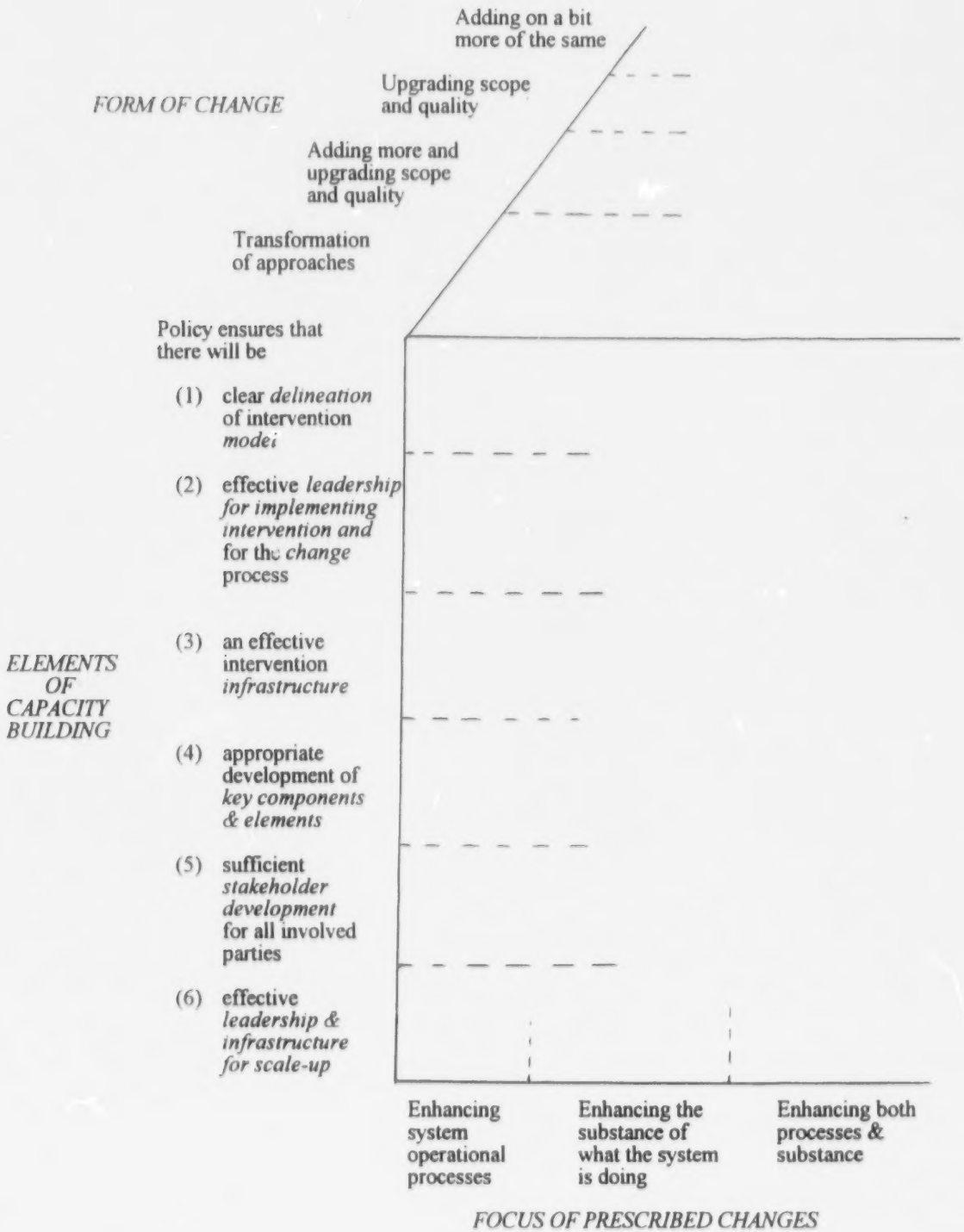
Fundamental Policy Concerns About Current Initiatives

In analyzing current initiatives from the perspective of addressing barriers to learning, our emphasis is on clarifying fundamental concerns -- not generating a list of operational problems. Ultimately, the intent of policy initiatives focusing on ameliorating complex psychosocial problems should be to enhance the *effectiveness* of interventions. As current policy efforts recognize, one aspect of achieving this aim is the commitment to *cohesiveness* (or integrated effort) by improving agency and department coordination/collaboration. Another aspect involves efforts to *enhance the nature and scope of intervention activity* (see Figure A-1).

With respect to cohesiveness, it is clear that policy initiatives to foster collaboration have not been paired with efforts to integrate the vast body of policy that is contributing to fragmentation. The main strategies for dealing with the lack of cohesive policies have been to grant (a) flexibility in the use of categorical funds and (b) temporary waivers from regulatory restrictions. These moves have helped in specific instances but have not provided the type of impetus for change that is needed. Direct attention to restructuring and reforming existing policy with a view to fostering cohesive intervention is long overdue.

With respect to improving the nature and scope of intervention activity, our analyses (using the dimensions represented in Figure A-1) suggest that most policy only adds a bit more of the same and pays scant attention to the substantive content of changes or to key elements of capacity building. This is particularly evident when one looks for specific changes in the way intervention activity is planned and implemented in communities and at school sites.

Figure A-1. Dimensions for Analyzing Policy Designed to Enhance the Nature and Scope of Intervention Activity.


Adding on a bit more of the same
Upgrading scope and quality
FORM OF CHANGE
Adding more and upgrading scope and quality
Transformation of approaches
Policy ensures that there will be
(1) clear *delineation* of intervention *model*
(2) effective *leadership for implementing intervention and* for the *change* process
(3) an effective intervention *infrastructure*
(4) appropriate development of *key components & elements*
(5) sufficient *stakeholder development* for all involved parties
(6) effective *leadership & infrastructure for scale-up*
ELEMENTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING
Enhancing system operational processes
Enhancing the substance of what the system is doing
Enhancing both processes & substance
FOCUS OF PRESCRIBED CHANGES

The concerns we raise are illustrated by analysis of two major initiatives: (a) school-linked services and (b) school-owned support services. In the former instance, the trend has been for community agencies simply to co-locate a few of their services on a few school campuses. In doing so, they provide some clients better access to services. Access clearly is a prerequisite to effective intervention. Access, of course, is no guarantee of effectiveness. Moreover, co-location is no guarantee of intervention cohesiveness. Indeed, in linking with schools, community agencies may simply operate in parallel to the intervention efforts of school personnel -- leading to another form of fragmentation. Even more of a problem is the reality that there simply are not enough community agency resources for all services to link with all schools. Thus, the situation becomes either a matter of limiting linkages to the first schools that express an interest or spreading limited resources (until they are exhausted) as more schools reach out. Finally, none of this is designed to deal with the fact that the nature and scope of intervention activity provided is inadequate to the task of effectively addressing barriers to student learning.

By approaching school-linked services as a co-location model, outside agencies are creating a sense of threat among personnel who staff school-owned support services. This certainly is not conducive to collaboration and further interferes with cohesiveness. A more fundamental concern, however, is that school-owned programs and services continue to be viewed as tangential in school reform policy. Thus, little attention is paid to restructuring and reforming how these resources are used. This clearly works against making them more effective.

In the long run, substantially increasing *availability and access* to essential help requires a true integration of all community and school owned resources; increasing intervention *effectiveness* requires changes that transform the nature and scope of how these and other resources are used.

These are but two examples, but they underscore the point that policy makers and reform leaders have yet to come to grips with the realities of addressing barriers to learning. And the likelihood of their doing so is not great as long as so many advocates for children and families pursue narrow and competing agendas.

As was discussed at the UCLA summit, we believe that enhancing intervention effectiveness in addressing barriers to student learning requires policy that

- is cohesive
- provides the resources necessary for transforming the nature and scope of intervention efforts so that comprehensive, integrated approaches are developed
- creates necessary infrastructure and provides for effective capacity building to ensure appropriate implementation of comprehensive, integrated approaches
- provides the resources necessary for implementing widespread scale-up.

Inadequate policy support related to any of these matters means that the aim of enhancing intervention effectiveness on a large-scale will not be achieved.

Appendix B

Some Thoughts About Improving Policy to Address Barriers to Student Learning

The lack of a unifying concept around which advocates and decision makers can rally is a central problem in moving policy forward to evolve truly comprehensive, integrated approaches for addressing barriers to learning. A related problem is the dearth of models clarifying the nature and scope of essential programs, services, and infrastructure mechanisms. And, with respect to systemic change, too little attention has been paid to conceiving fundamental phases and steps of diffusion efforts. The following brief comments, expanded from our 1996 policy report, are intended to illuminate each of these matters.

Our Center's Approach to Developing a Unifying Concept to Guide Policy

Despite the fact that some model demonstrations are attracting attention, it seems clear that the *primary* and *essential* nature of activity to address barriers to student learning has not been effectively thrust before policy makers and reformers. Thus, although increasing numbers of schools are reaching out to expand services that can support and enrich the educational process, efforts to create a comprehensive, integrated approach still are not assigned a high priority.

Ultimately, addressing barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development must be viewed from a societal perspective. From this viewpoint, the aim becomes that of developing a comprehensive, integrated continuum of community and school programs for local catchment areas. The framework for such a continuum emerges from analyses of social, economic, political, and cultural factors associated with the problems of youth and from reviews of promising practices. It is built on holistic and developmental perspectives that are translated into an extensive continuum of programs focused on fostering the well-being of individuals, families, and the contexts in which they live, work, and play. Such a continuum ranges from primary prevention and early-age intervention, through approaches for treating problems soon after onset, to treatment for severe and chronic problems. Included are programs designed to promote and maintain safety at home and at school, programs to promote and maintain physical and mental health, preschool programs, early school-adjustment programs, programs to improve and augment ongoing social and academic supports, programs to intervene prior to referral for intensive treatments, and programs providing intensive treatments. Implied is the importance of using the least restrictive and nonintrusive forms of intervention required to address problems and accommodate diversity. This scope of activity underscores the need to develop formal mechanisms for essential and long-lasting interprogram connections (collaboration in the form of information sharing, cooperation, coordination, integration) on a daily basis and over time.

To address gaps in current initiatives to reform and restructure education and also in those efforts to restructure community health and human services, a basic policy shift must occur. To this end, we have introduced the concept of the Enabling Component as a policy-oriented notion around which to unify efforts to address barriers to learning (Adelman, 1996a, 1996b; Adelman & Taylor, 1994, 1997a). The concept is intended to underscore that current reforms are based on an inadequate two component model for restructuring school and community resources and that it is essential to move to a three component model if student achievement is to increase significantly. The current situation is one where, despite awareness of the many barriers to learning, school reformers continue to concentrate mainly on improving instruction and school management. The primary and essential nature of relevant programs and services that enable students to become full participants in their academic achievement and healthy development has not been thrust before policy makers and education reformers in an effective manner. As a result, the need to restructure education support programs and services remains unmet, and this works against meshing school resources with initiatives to integrate community services and link them to schools.

A three component model calls for elevating efforts to address barriers to learning, including social, emotional, and physical health problems, to the level of one of three fundamental and essential facets of education reform and school and community agency restructuring (see Figure B-1). That is, to enable teachers to teach effectively, we suggest there must not only be effective instruction and well-managed schools, but that barriers to learning must be handled in a comprehensive way. From this perspective, comprehensive approaches to addressing barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development require splicing together programs to address mental health and psychosocial concerns and much more.

Emergence of a cohesive Enabling Component requires policy reform and operational restructuring that allow for weaving together what is available at a school, expanding this through integrating school, community, and home resources, and enhancing access to community resources by linking as many as feasible to programs at the school. This involves extensive restructuring of school-owned enabling activity, such as pupil services and special and compensatory education programs. In the process, there must be mechanisms to coordinate and eventually integrate (a) school-owned enabling activity, (b) school and community-owned resources, and (c) the enabling, instructional, and management components.

Although some calls for comprehensive, integrated approaches are attracting attention, they do not convey the perspective that interventions addressing barriers to teaching and learning are *essential* to the success of school reform. The next step in moving toward a comprehensive approach is to bring the following message home to policy makers at all levels.

> *For reforms to produce desired student outcomes, school and community reformers must expand their vision beyond refining instructional and management functions and recognize that there is a third primary and essential set of functions involved in enabling teaching and learning.*

By calling for reforms that fully integrate a focus on addressing barriers to learning, the concept of an Enabling Component responds to a wide range of psychosocial factors interfering with school learning and performance and encompasses the type of models described as full-service schools -- and goes beyond them (Adelman, 1996b). By providing a moderate generalist perspective for restructuring school-owned enabling activity and blending school and community resources, the concept provides a much needed unifying focus around which to formulate new policy. Adoption of an inclusive unifying concept is seen as pivotal in convincing policy makers to move to a position that recognizes the essential nature of activity to enable learning. More specifically, the Enabling Component concept calls on reformers to expand the current emphasis on improving instruction and school management to include a *comprehensive* component for addressing barriers to learning. All three components are seen as essential, complementary, and overlapping. Evidence of the value of rallying around a broad unifying concept is seen in the fact that in 1995 the state legislature in California considered the type of policy shift outlined here as part of a major urban education bill (AB 784). And in 1997, California's Department of Education included a version of such a concept (called Learning Support) in their school program quality review guidelines.

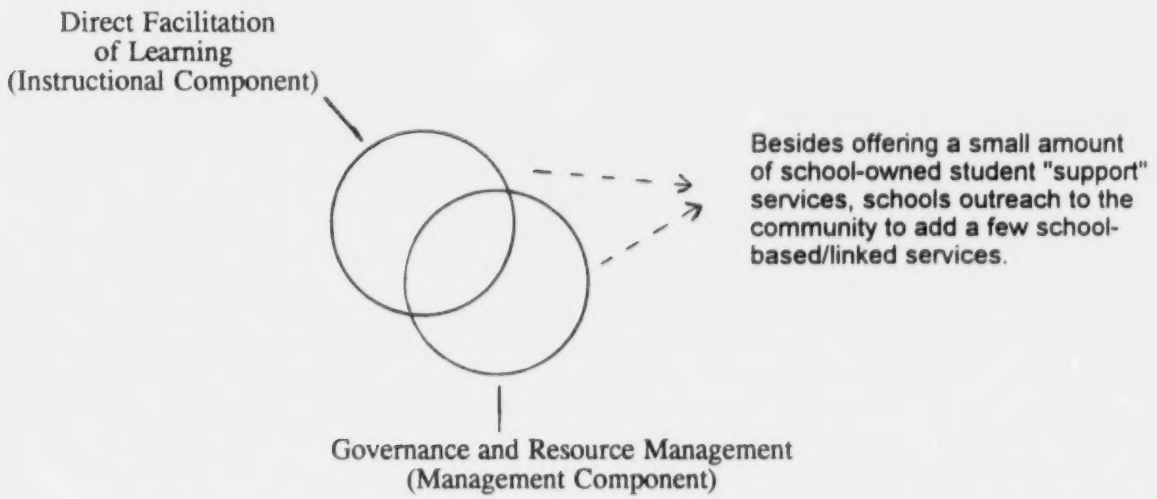
A Model for a Programmatic Focus

Operationalizing an enabling component requires formulating a carefully delimited framework of basic programmatic areas and creating an infrastructure for restructuring enabling activity. Based on analyses of extant school and community activity, we cluster enabling activity into six areas (see Exhibit B-1; for a detailed discussion, see Adelman, 1996a, and the Learning Center Model, 1995). The six areas encompass interventions to (1) enhance classroom-based efforts to enable learning, (2) provide prescribed student and family assistance, (3) respond to and prevent crises,

Figure B-1

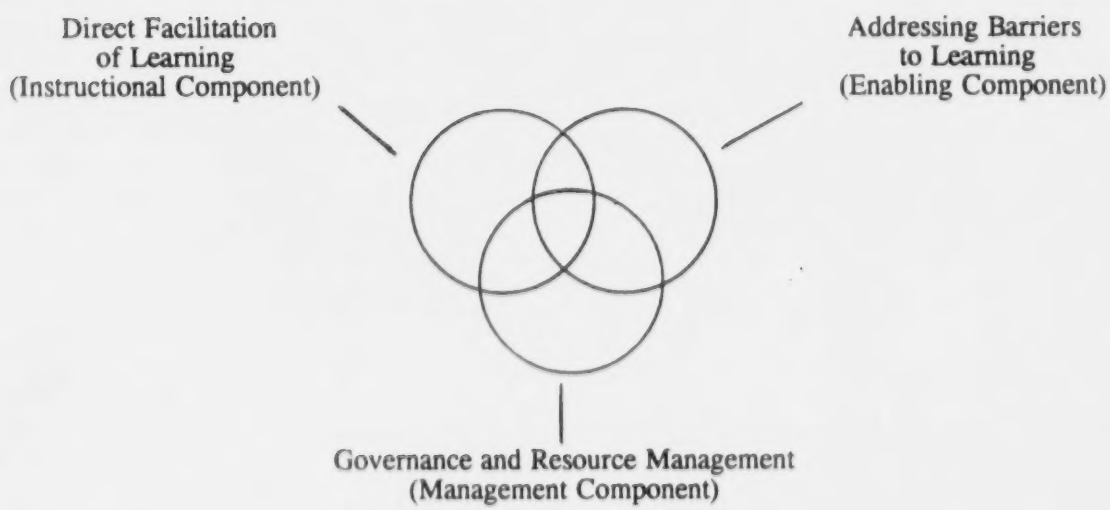
A Two Component Model for Reform and Restructuring

Question: *How do reforms using such a model address barriers to student learning?*


Direct Facilitation
of Learning
(Instructional Component)
Besides offering a small amount of school-owned student "support" services, schools outreach to the community to add a few school-based/linked services.
Governance and Resource Management
(Management Component)

A Three Component Model for Reform and Restructuring

Establishes a component for addressing barriers to learning
which is treated as primary and essential
and which weaves together school and community resources
to develop comprehensive approaches for doing so



(4) support transitions, (5) increase home involvement in schooling, and (6) outreach to develop greater community involvement and support -- including recruitment of volunteers.

An essential infrastructure encompasses mechanisms for restructuring resources in ways that enhance each programmatic area's efficacy. It also includes mechanisms for coordinating among enabling activity, for enhancing resources by developing direct linkages between school and community programs, for moving toward increased integration of school and community resources, and for integrating the instructional, enabling, and management components (see Exhibits B-2 and B-3).

After policy makers recognize the essential nature of a component for addressing barriers to learning, it should be easier to weave all enabling activity together (including special and compensatory education) and elevate the status of programs to enhance healthy development. It also should be less difficult to gain acceptance of the need for fundamental policy shifts to reshape programs of pre- and in-service education.

Ultimately, a comprehensive set of programs to address barriers and enable learning and teaching must be woven into the fabric of every school. In addition, families of schools need to establish linkages in order to maximize use of limited school and community resources. Over time, by working to develop comprehensive, integrated approaches, schools can again become an integrated and highly valued part of their communities.

An Approach to Building Necessary Infrastructure

A policy shift and programmatic focus are necessary but insufficient. For significant systemic change to occur, policy and program commitments must be demonstrated through allocation/ redeployment of resources (e.g., finances, personnel, time, space, equipment) that can adequately operationalize policy and promising practices. In particular, there must be sufficient resources to develop an effective structural foundation for system change. Existing infrastructure mechanisms must be modified in ways that guarantee new policy directions are translated into appropriate daily practices. Well-designed infrastructure mechanisms ensure there is local ownership, a critical mass of committed stakeholders, processes that can overcome barriers to stakeholders working together effectively, and strategies that can mobilize and maintain proactive effort so that changes are implemented and renewed over time.

Institutionalizing a comprehensive, integrated approach requires redesigning mechanisms with respect to at least five basic infrastructure concerns, namely, (1) governance, (2) planning-implementation associated with specific organizational and program objectives, (3) coordination/ integration for cohesion, (4) daily leadership, and (5) communication and information management. In reforming mechanisms, new collaborative arrangements must be established, and authority (power) must be redistributed -- all of which is easy to say and extremely hard to accomplish. Reform obviously requires providing adequate support (time, space, materials, equipment) -- not just initially but over time -- to those who operate the mechanisms. And, there must be appropriate incentives and safeguards for those undertaking the tasks.

In terms of task focus, infrastructure changes must attend to (a) interweaving school and community resources for addressing barriers to learning (a component to enable learning), direct facilitation of learning (instruction), and system management, (b) reframing inservice programs -- including an emphasis on cross-training, and (c) establishing appropriate forms of quality improvement, accountability, and self-renewal. Clearly, all this requires greater involvement of professionals providing health and human service and other programs addressing barriers to learning. And this means involvement in every facet, especially governance.

A Model for Getting from Here to There

The institutional changes for moving toward comprehensive, integrated approaches cannot be achieved without sophisticated and appropriately financed systemic change processes (see Exhibit B-4). Restructuring on a large scale involves substantive organizational and programmatic transformation at multiple jurisdictional levels. Although this seems self-evident, its profound implications are widely ignored (e.g., see Adelman, 1993; Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Argyris, 1993; Elias, 1997; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Knoff, 1995; Replication and Program Services, 1993; Sarason, 1996; Schorr, 1997).

At any site, key stakeholders and their leadership must understand and commit to restructuring. Commitment must be reflected in policy statements and creation of an organizational structure that ensures effective leadership and resources. The process begins with activity designed to create readiness for the necessary changes by enhancing a climate/culture for change. Steps involved include: (1) building interest and consensus for developing a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development, (2) introducing basic concepts to relevant groups of stakeholders, (3) establishing a policy framework that recognizes the approach is a primary and essential facet of the institution's activity, and (4) appointment of a site leader (of equivalent status to the leaders for the instructional and management facets) who can ensure policy commitments are carried out.

Overlapping the efforts to create readiness are processes to develop an organizational structure for start-up and phase-in. This involves (1) establishment of mechanisms and procedures to guide reforms, such as a steering group and leadership training, (2) formulation of specific start-up and phase-in plans, (3) establishment and training of a team that analyzes, restructures, and enhances resources with the aim of evolving a comprehensive, integrated approach, (4) phased-in reorganization of all enabling activity, (5) outreach to establish collaborative linkages among schools and district and community resources, and (6) establishment of systems to ensure quality improvement, momentum for reforms, and ongoing renewal.

Concluding Comments

School-community collaboratives represent a promising direction for efforts to generate essential interventions. In doing so, however, steps must be taken to counter the piecemeal and fragmented approach that characterizes most school and community efforts. As emphasized throughout this discussion, effectively meeting the challenges of addressing persistent barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development requires melding resources of home, school, and community to create a comprehensive, integrated approach. (Such an approach should not be confused with participating on a comprehensive or multi-disciplinary team that discusses cases or coordinates resources.) Getting there from here involves a policy shift that places the development of such an approach on a par with current reforms related to instruction and school management.

All of this leads to new roles for professionals who work in schools and communities. For example, staff currently providing health and human services can contribute a great deal to the creation of comprehensive, integrated approaches. They cannot do so, however, as long as they are completely consumed by their daily caseloads. Their's must be a multifaceted role -- providing services as well as vision and leadership that transforms how schools and communities address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development. Developing an effective approach, requires shifting priorities and redeploying time for program coordination, development, and leadership. There is adequate evidence to make the case that increased dividends can accrue from doing so.

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Exhibit B-1. Toward Comprehensive, Integrated Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Operationalizing an Enabling Component

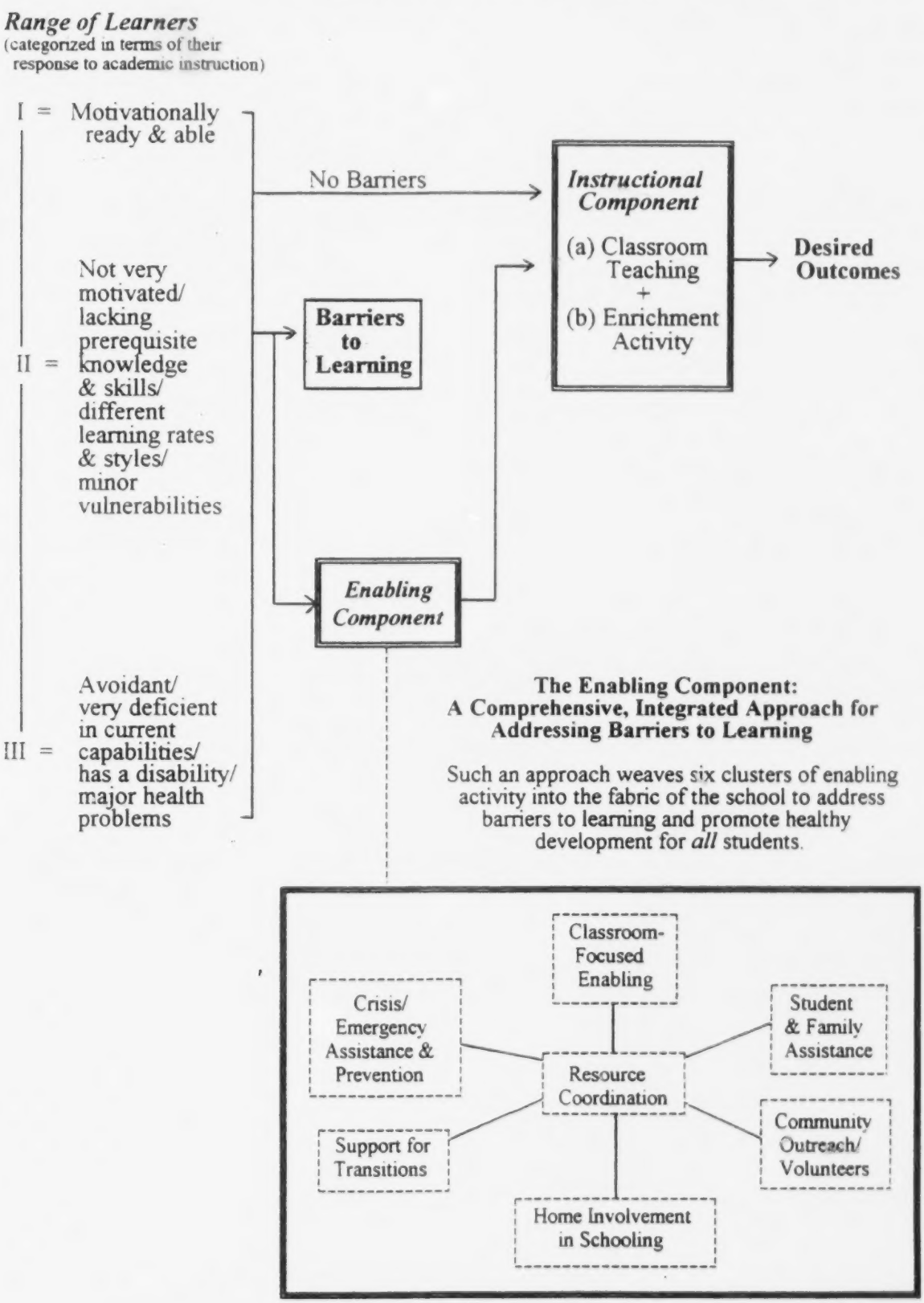

Range of Learners
(categorized in terms of their response to academic instruction)
I = Motivationally ready & able
II = Not very motivated/ lacking prerequisite knowledge & skills/ different learning rates & styles/ minor vulnerabilities
III = Avoidant/ very deficient in current capabilities/ has a disability/ major health problems
No Barriers
Barriers to Learning
Instructional Component
(a) Classroom Teaching
+
(b) Enrichment Activity
Desired Outcomes
Enabling Component
The Enabling Component: A Comprehensive, Integrated Approach for Addressing Barriers to Learning
Such an approach weaves six clusters of enabling activity into the fabric of the school to address barriers to learning and promote healthy development for *all* students.
Classroom-Focused Enabling
Crisis/ Emergency Assistance & Prevention
Student & Family Assistance
Resource Coordination
Community Outreach/ Volunteers
Support for Transitions
Home Involvement in Schooling

Exhibit B-1 (cont.)

Six Interrelated Programmatic Areas for Enabling Learning

1. Classroom-Focused Enabling

When a classroom teacher encounters difficulty in working with a youngster, the first step is to see whether there are ways to address the problem within the classroom and perhaps with added home involvement. Thus, the emphasis here is on enhancing classroom-based efforts to enable learning by increasing teacher effectiveness for preventing and handling problems in the classroom.* This is accomplished by providing personalized help to increase a teacher's array of strategies for working with a wider range of individual differences (e.g., through use of accommodative and compensatory strategies, peer tutoring and volunteers to enhance social and academic support, resource and itinerant teachers and counselors in the classroom). Two aims are to increase mainstreaming efficacy and reduce the need for special services.

> Work in this area requires (1) programs for personalized professional development (for teachers and aides), (2) systems to expand resources, (3) programs for temporary out of class help, and (4) programs to develop aides, volunteers, and any others who help in classrooms or who work with teachers to enable learning. Through classroom-focused enabling programs, teachers are better prepared to address similar problems when they arise in the future.

2. Student and Family Assistance Programs and Services

Some problems, of course, cannot be handled without special interventions, thus the need for student and family assistance. The emphasis here is on providing special services in a personalized way to assist with a broad-range of needs. To begin with, available social, physical and mental health programs in the school and community are used. As community outreach brings in other resources, they are linked to existing activity in an integrated manner. Special attention is paid to enhancing systems for triage, case and resource management, direct services to meet immediate needs, and referral for special services and special education resources and placements as appropriate. Continuous efforts are made to expand and enhance resources. An invaluable context for this activity is a school-based **Family and Community Center Service Facility**. The work should be supported by multi-media advanced technology. As major outcomes, the intent is to ensure special assistance is provided when necessary and appropriate and that such assistance is effective.

> Work in this area requires (1) programs designed to support classroom focused enabling -- with specific emphasis on reducing the need for teachers to seek special programs and services, (2) a stakeholder information program to clarify available assistance and how to access help, (3) systems to facilitate requests for assistance and strategies to evaluate the requests (including use of strategies designed to reduce the need for special intervention), (4) a programmatic approach for handling referrals, (5) programs providing direct service, (6) programmatic approaches for effective case and resource management, (7) interface with community outreach to assimilate additional resources into current service delivery, and (8) relevant education for stakeholders.

*Besides Classroom-Focused Enabling, the regular classroom curriculum should focus on fostering socio-emotional and physical development. Such a focus is an essential element of efforts to prevent learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems.

(cont.)

Exhibit B-1 (cont.)

Six Interrelated Programmatic Areas for Enabling Learning

3. Crisis Assistance and Prevention

The emphasis here is on responding to, minimizing the impact of, and preventing crises. If there is a school-based **Family and Community Center Service Facility**, it provides a staging area and context for some of the programmatic activity. Intended outcomes of crisis assistance include ensuring immediate assistance is provided when emergencies arise and follow-up care is provided when necessary and appropriate so that students are able to resume learning without undue delays. Prevention activity outcomes are reflected in the creation of a safe and productive environment and the development of student and family attitudes about and capacities for dealing with violence and other threats to safety.

> Work in this area requires (1) systems and programs for emergency/crisis response at a site, throughout a school complex, and community-wide (including a program to ensure follow-up care), (2) prevention programs for school and community to address school safety/violence reduction, suicide prevention, child abuse prevention and so forth, and (3) relevant education for stakeholders.

4. Support for Transitions

The emphasis here is on planning, developing, and maintaining a comprehensive focus on the variety of transition concerns confronting students and their families. The work in this area can be greatly aided by advanced technology. Anticipated outcomes are reduced levels of alienation and increased levels of positive attitudes toward and involvement at school and in a range of learning activity.

> Work in this area requires (1) programs to establish a welcoming and socially supportive community (especially for new arrivals), (2) programs for articulation (for each new step in formal education, vocational and college counseling, support in moving to and from special education, support in moving to post school living and work), (3) before and after-school programs to enrich learning and provide recreation in a safe environment, and (4) relevant education for stakeholders.

(cont.)

Exhibit B-1 (cont.)

Six Interrelated Programmatic Areas for Enabling Learning

5. Home Involvement in Schooling

The emphasis here is on enhancing home involvement through programs to address specific parent learning and support needs (e.g., ESL classes, mutual support groups), mobilize parents as problem solvers when their child has problems (e.g., parent education, instruction in helping with schoolwork), elicit help from families in addressing the needs of the community, and so forth. The context for some of this activity may be a **parent center** (which may be part of the **Family and Community Service Center Facility** if one has been established at the site). Outcomes include specific measures of parent learning and indices of student progress and community enhancement related to home involvement.

> Work in this area requires (1) programs to address specific learning and support needs of adults in the home, (2) programs to help those in the home meet their basic obligations to the student, (3) systems to improve communication about matters essential to the student and family, (4) programs to enhance the home-school connection and sense of community, (5) interventions to enhance participation in making decision that are essential to the student, (6) programs to enhance home support related to the student's basic learning and development, (7) interventions to mobilize those at home to problem solve related to student needs, (8) intervention to elicit help (support, collaborations, and partnerships) from those at home with respect to meeting classroom, school, and community needs, and (9) relevant education for stakeholders.

6. Community Outreach for Involvement and Support (including Volunteers)

The emphasis here is on outreaching to the community to build linkages and collaborations, develop greater involvement in schooling, and enhance support for efforts to enable learning. Outreach is made to (a) public and private community agencies, universities, colleges, organizations, and facilities, (b) businesses and professional organizations and groups, and (c) volunteer service programs, organizations, and clubs. The **Family and Community Service Center Facility** would be a context for some of this activity (if one has been established at the site). Outcomes include specific measures of community participation and indices of student progress and community enhancement related to use of volunteers and use of additional community resources.

> Work in this area requires (1) programs to recruit community involvement and support (e.g., linkages and integration with community health and social services; cadres of volunteers, mentors, and individuals with special expertise and resources; local businesses to adopt-a-school and provide resources, awards, incentives, and jobs; formal partnership arrangements), (2) systems and programs specifically designed to train, screen, and maintain volunteers (e.g., parents, college students, senior citizens, peer and cross-age tutors and counselors, and professionals-in-training to provide direct help for staff and students -- especially targeted students), (3) outreach programs to hard to involve students and families (those who don't come to school regularly -- including truants and dropouts), (4) programs to enhance community-school connections and sense of community (e.g., orientations, open houses, performances and cultural and sports events, festivals and celebrations, workshops and fairs), and (5) relevant education for stakeholders.

Note: Not addressed here are the general tasks of governance and coordination related to all this activity.

Exhibit B-2

Developing a Resource Coordinating Team

Creation of a School-site Resource Coordinating *Team* provides a good starting place in efforts to enhance coordination and integration of services and programs. Such a team not only can begin the process of transforming what is already available, it can help reach out to District and community resources to enhance enabling activity.

A Resource Coordinating Team differs from Student Study and Guidance Teams. The focus of a Resource Coordinating Team is not on individual students. Rather, it is oriented to clarifying resources and how they are best used. That is, it provides a necessary mechanism for enhancing *systems* for communication and coordination.

For many support service personnel, their past experiences of working in isolation -- and in competition -- make this collaborative opportunity unusual and one which requires that they learn new ways of relating and functioning. For those concerned with school restructuring, establishment of such a team is one facet of efforts designed to restructure school support services in ways that (a) integrates them with school-based/linked support programs, special projects, and teams and (b) outreaches and links up with community health and social service resources.

Purposes

Such a team exemplifies the type of on-site organizational mechanism needed for overall cohesion and coordination of school support programs for students and families. Minimally, such a team can reduce fragmentation and enhance cost-efficacy by assisting in ways that encourage programs to function in a coordinated and increasingly integrated way. For example, the team can develop communication among school staff and to the home about available assistance and referral processes, coordinate resources, and monitor programs to be certain they are functioning effectively and efficiently. More generally, this group can provide leadership in guiding school personnel and clientele in evolving the school's vision for its support program (e.g., as not only preventing and correcting learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems but as contributing to classroom efforts to foster academic, social, emotional, and physical functioning). The group also can help to identify ways to improve existing resources and acquire additional ones.

Major examples of the group's activity are

- preparing and circulating a list profiling available resources (programs, personnel, special projects, services, agencies) at the school, in the district, and in the community
- clarifying how school staff and families can access them
- refining and clarifying referral, triage, and case management processes to ensure resources are used appropriately (e.g., where needed most, in keeping with the principle of adopting the least intervention needed, with support for referral follow-through)
- mediating problems related to resource allocation and scheduling,
- ensuring sharing, coordination, and maintenance of needed resources,
- exploring ways to improve and augment existing resources to ensure a wider range are available (including encouraging preventive approaches, developing linkages with other district and community programs, and facilitating relevant staff development)
- evolving a site's enabling activity infrastructure by assisting in creation of area program teams and Family/Parent Centers as hubs for enabling activity

(cont.)

Developing a Resource Coordinating Team (cont.)

Membership

Team membership typically includes representatives of all activity designed to support a school's teaching efforts (e.g., a school psychologist, nurse, counselor, social worker, key special education staff, etc.), along with someone representing the governance body (e.g., a site administrator such as an assistant principal). Also, included are representatives of community agencies already connected with the school, with others invited to join the team as they became involved.

The team meets as needed. Initially, this may mean once a week. Later, when meetings are scheduled for every 2-3 weeks, continuity and momentum are maintained through interim tasks performed by individuals or subgroups. Because some participants are at a school on a part-time basis, one of the problems that must be addressed is that of rescheduling personnel so that there is an overlapping time for meeting together. Of course, the reality is that not all team members will be able to attend every meeting, but a good approximation can be made at each meeting, with steps taken to keep others informed as to what was done.

Examples of Resource Coordination Team Initial and Ongoing Tasks

- Orientation for representatives to introduce each to the other and provide further clarity of Team's purposes and processes
- Review membership to determine if any group or major program is not represented; take steps to assure proper representation
- Share information regarding what exists at the site (programs, services, systems for triage, referral, case management)
- Share information about other resources at complex schools and in the immediate community and in the cluster and district-wide
- Analyze information on resources to identify important needs at the site
- Establish priorities for efforts to enhance resources and systems
- Formulate plans for pursuing priorities
- Discussion of the need to coordinate crisis response across the complex and to share complex resources for site specific crises (with conclusions to be share at Complex Resource Coordinating Council)
- Discussion of staff (and other stakeholder) development activity
- Discussion of quality improvement and longer-term planning (e.g., efficacy, pooling of resources)

General meeting format

- Updating on and introduction of team membership
- Reports from those who had between meeting assignments
- Current topic for discussion and planning
- Decision regarding between meeting assignments
- Ideas for next agenda

Developing a Complex (Multisite) Resource Coordinating Council

Schools in the same geographic (catchment) area have a number of shared concerns, and feeder schools often are interacting with the same family. Furthermore, some programs and personnel are (or can be) shared by several neighboring schools, thus minimizing redundancy and reducing costs.

Purpose

In general, a group of sites can benefit from having a Resource Coordinating *Council* as an ongoing mechanism that provides leadership, facilitates communication, and focuses on coordination, integration, and quality improvement of whatever range of activity the sites has for enabling activity.

Some specific functions are

- To share information about resource availability (at participating schools and in the immediate community and in geographically related schools and district-wide) with a view to enhancing coordination and integration
- To identify specific needs and problems and explore ways to address them (e.g., Can some needs e met by pooling certain resources? Can improved linkages and collaborations be created with community agencies? Can additional resources be acquired? Can some staff and other stakeholder development activity be combined?)
- To discuss and formulate longer-term plans and advocate for appropriate resource allocation related to enabling activities.

Membership

Each school can be represented on the *Council* by two members of its Resource *Team*. To assure a broad perspective, one of the two can be the site administrator responsible for enabling activity; the other can represent line staff.

Facilitation

Council facilitation involves responsibility for convening regular monthly (and other ad hoc) meetings, building the agenda, assuring that meetings stay task focused and that between meeting assignments will be carried out, and ensuring meeting summaries are circulated.

With a view to shared leadership and effective advocacy, an administrative leader and a council member elected by the group can co-facilitate meetings. Meetings can be rotated among schools to enhance understanding of each site in the council.

Location

Meeting at each school on a rotating basis can enhance understanding of the complex.

(cont.)

Developing a Complex (Multisite) Resource Coordinating Council (cont.)

Steps in Establishing a Complex Coordinating Council

a. Informing potential members about the Council's purpose and organization (e.g., functions, representation, time commitment).

Accomplished through presentation and handouts.

b. Selection of representatives.

Chosen at a meeting of a school's Resource Coordinating Team. (If there is not yet an operational Team, the school's governance can choose acting representatives.)

c. Task focus of initial meetings

- Orient representatives to introduce each to the other and provide further clarity of Council's purposes and processes
- Review membership to determine if any group or major program is not represented; take steps to assure proper representation
- Share information regarding what exists at each site
- Share information about other resources at complex schools and in the immediate community and in the cluster and district-wide
- Analyze information on resources to identify important needs at specific sites and for the complex as a whole
- Establish priorities for efforts to enhance resources
- Formulate plans for pursuing priorities
- Discuss plan for coordinated crisis response across the complex and sharing of resources for site specific crises
- Discuss combined staff (and other stakeholder) development activity
- Discuss (and possibly visit) school-based centers (Family Service Center, Parent Center) with a view to best approach for the complex
- Discuss quality improvement and longer-term planning (e.g., efficacy, pooling of resources)

d. General meeting format

- Updating on and introduction of council membership
- Reports from those who had between meeting assignments
- Current topic for discussion and planning
- Decision regarding between meeting assignments
- Ideas for next agenda

Exhibit B-3

Restructuring Support Services/Integrating Community Resources
Overview of Key Steps in Establishing an Enabling Component

At any site, key stakeholders and their leadership must understand and commit to restructuring plans; commitment must be reflected in policy statements and creation of an infrastructure that ensures the necessary leadership and resources.

Orientation: Creating Readiness

1) Build interest and consensus for developing the component

2) Introduce basic ideas to relevant groups of stakeholders

3) Establish a policy framework -- the leadership group at a site should make a policy commitment that adopts a comprehensive, integrated approach to enabling learning as a primary and essential component of their work

4) Identify a site leader (equivalent to the leader for the Instructional Component) to ensure policy commitments are carried out

Start-up and Phase-in: Building an Infrastructure

5) Establish a steering group and other temporary mechanism to guide the component and provide members of the group with leadership training

6) Formulate specific start-up and phase-in plans

7) Establish and train a site-based Resource Coordinating Team (and, as soon as feasible, a Complex Resource Coordinating Council)

8) Organize areas of enabling activity and establish a cross disciplinary infrastructure

9) Work to enhance component visibility, communication, sharing, and problem solving

10) Attempt to fill program/service gaps through outreach designed to establish formal collaborative linkages with district and community resources

11) Establish a system for quality improvement

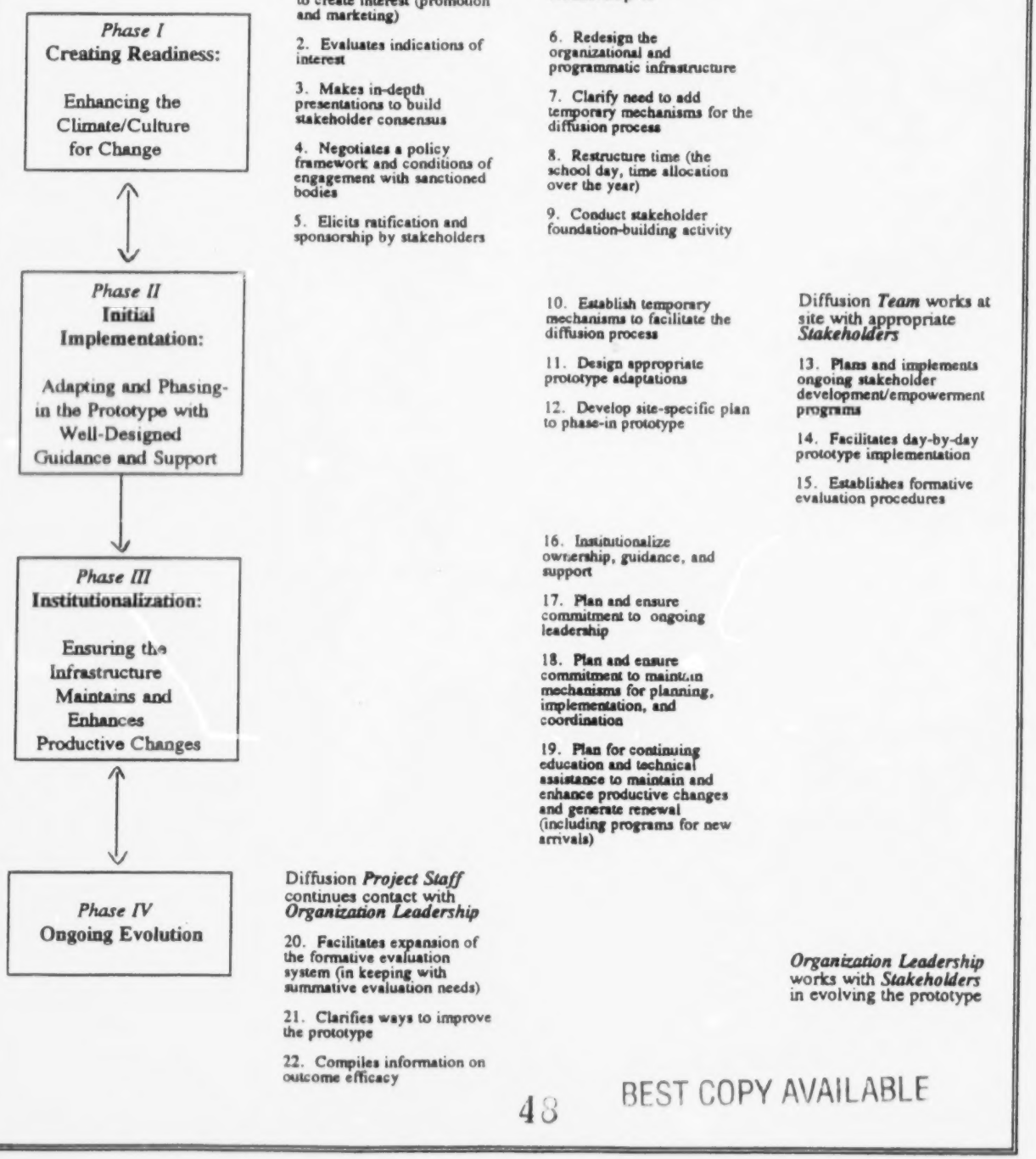
Maintenance and Evolution: Toward a Refined Infrastructure, Increased Outcome Efficacy, and Creative Renewal

12) Plan for maintenance

13) Develop strategies for maintaining momentum and progress

14) Generate renewal

Exhibit B-4· Diffusion Process: Phases and Major Tasks


Phase I
Creating Readiness:
Enhancing the Climate/Culture for Change
Phase II
Initial Implementation:
Adapting and Phasing-in the Prototype with Well-Designed Guidance and Support
Phase III
Institutionalization:
Ensuring the Infrastructure Maintains and Enhances Productive Changes
Phase IV
Ongoing Evolution
Diffusion Project Staff
1. Disseminates the prototype to create interest (promotion and marketing)
2. Evaluates indications of interest
3. Makes in-depth presentations to build stakeholder consensus
4. Negotiates a policy framework and conditions of engagement with sanctioned bodies
5. Elicits ratification and sponsorship by stakeholders
Diffusion Team works at site with Organization Leadership to
6. Redesign the organizational and programmatic infrastructure
7. Clarify need to add temporary mechanisms for the diffusion process
8. Restructure time (the school day, time allocation over the year)
9. Conduct stakeholder foundation-building activity
10. Establish temporary mechanisms to facilitate the diffusion process
11. Design appropriate prototype adaptations
12. Develop site-specific plan to phase-in prototype
Diffusion Team works at site with appropriate Stakeholders
13. Plans and implements ongoing stakeholder development/empowerment programs
14. Facilitates day-by-day prototype implementation
15. Establishes formative evaluation procedures
16. Institutionalize ownership, guidance, and support
17. Plan and ensure commitment to ongoing leadership
18. Plan and ensure commitment to maintain mechanisms for planning, implementation, and coordination
19. Plan for continuing education and technical assistance to maintain and enhance productive changes and generate renewal (including programs for new arrivals)
Diffusion Project Staff continues contact with Organization Leadership
20. Facilitates expansion of the formative evaluation system (in keeping with summative evaluation needs)
21. Clarifies ways to improve the prototype
22. Compiles information on outcome efficacy
Organization Leadership works with Stakeholders in evolving the prototype

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